Providing facilities to Vaishno Devi pilgrims

598. SHRI BALAVANT *ALIAS* BALAPTE:

SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government and the State Government of Jammu and Kashmir bear any expenditure for providing facilities to Vaishno Devi pilgrims;

(b) if so, the details of the expenditure incurred during last three years and till date year-wise;

(c) the number of the pilgrims benefited during the above mentioned period;

(d) the details of the facilities provided to pilgrims by Government;

(e) whether there is any proposal of Government to provide more facilities to the pilgrims; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and the estimated expenditure thereon?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a): The facilities to Shri Vaishno Devi pilgrims are being provided by Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board Katra out of their own resources.

(b) A one time assistance of Rs. 40.38 lacs for construction of Yatri Niwas Bhawan, pilgrims sheds at Katra and tented accommodation has been provided by Government of India in the year 1993. During last 3 years no assistance for providing facilities to the pilgrims has been provided by the Central Government and the State Government.

(c) The number of tourist visiting Vaishno Devi for the last three years are as follows:

Year	Tourist arrivals (in lakh)
2004	61.09
2005	62.51
2006	69.50
2007 upto 12th December)	68.87

(d) to (f) Provision of facilities to the pilgrim tourists at the Shrine is a regular feature of the activities of the Shrine Board. The Government's role is limited only to the extent of providing the necessary infrastructure support like road connectivity, drinking water facilities and power supply etc. to the Katra Town.

Development of tourist spot in Andaman and Nicobar Islands

599. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has prepared any "Vision Document" for the speedy development of Andaman and Nicobar Islands during the next 10 to 15 years;

(b) whether Government proposer to make Andaman and Nicobar Islands as one of the